NOTES FOR

CURSOR
Programs for PET™ Computers

NUMBER 16

A CURSORY GLANCE

This month I have some things to report which were gleaned at a one-day visit to the Winter Consumer Electronic Show in early January. When I arrived at the Las Vegas Convention Center, my first problem was explaining to a bored clerk what Cursor is. Evidently, her responibility was to keep out the riff-raff, and she seemed to think that producing computer software didn't have much to do with electronics. Finally, she decided that I must be a manufacturer, gave me a badge, and sent me on my way.

It is difficult to summarize the bits and pieces of rumor, innuendo, fiction and fact that seem to be the product of these shows. There is a broad division between products that are officially introduced, and those that are shown (usually not at the main exhibit) simply to learn how dealers and others will react. It's also important to realize that there is often a significant delay between the announcement of a product and the availability of that product from your local dealer. From what I heard at the show, Commodore officially introduced two products: the 80 character Pet, and a new disk system with dual 5 inch Micropolis floppies which has a storage capacity of about a million characters. We probably won't see either product until May or June.

The prototype 80 character Pet is a very hot new product! The screen definition is about as good as I've seen on the best commercial CRT terminals: crisp and clear, right out to the corners. The machine has a 12 inch screen, and is packaged much like the original Pet, except that there is less space between the screen and the keyboard. In fact, on the prototype, there wasn't room to mount floppy drives between the screen and the keyboard. The 80 character Pet uses what is called a 'video controller', a specialized chip designed to control the functions of a CRT display. I wasn't able to do anything except poke at the keyboard a few minutes, but I am led to believe that one feature we can expect is the ability to control independent 'windows' of text. One example of a practical use of this concept is the Programmer's Toolkit from Palo Alto ICs, which uses a small window in the upper right portion of the screen when 'tracing' the execution of a Basic program. When such capabilities are directly available in an easy-to-use fashion, we'll all find numerous applications that will be well-suited to 'windowing'. It will be interesting to find out what the new Pet will cost. If priced correctly, Commodore may be able to capture a large share of the small business market.

The new machine may make it possible for Commodore to compete with the new Radio Shack Model II. There is a problem, however: the Radio Shack uses a Z80, and you can buy CP/M Version 2 for it from several sources. This means that all that CP/M software is immediatly available on the Trash II. You don't suppose that Commodore will design a Z80 or 8086 based computer, in order to get on the CP/M bandwagon, hard disks and all?

CURSOR 16 HAS THESE PROGRAMS: (Names ending with '!' use CB2 sound)

COVER16   Press any key, and the patterns will be filled with that character. A shifted space gives you blanks again, and a regular space brings in the Table of Contents. By Tony Schettino.

NAB!   It's you against the computer, as you try to escape a head-on crash. By Malcolm Michael.

FIRE!   You pilot a Fire Department helicopter as you try to put out a blaze. By Brian Sawyer.

ALIENS!   The aliens are attacking, but you can protect earth by destroying them before they land. By Mike Hamilton.

BONZO!   Randall Lockwood wrote this game of the Bonzo Dog Chase.

CATCH!   Play catch with the Pet. By George Leotti.

MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

Every program this month uses the Pet's CB2 sound. Remember that if you hit the [STOP] key, you might leave things in a state of disrepair. There may be two effects: the sound may continue, and you may not be able to SAVE a program. You can correct this condition by typing three commands: POKE 59464,0: POKE 59466,0: POKE 59467,0

NAB!... It's you against the computer as you try to avoid a head-on crash. You control the solid white dot by using the numeric pad in the usual fashion: [4] moves you left, [6] is right, [2] is down and [8] is up. However, you can only change lanes at the four shaded intersections! Each plus sign that you drive over gives you 10 points. Once your score passes 1000, your opponent begins to lay down diamonds, which are worth 20 points each. We are not responsible for Pet keyboards that are worn out playing this game.

FIRE!... You pilot a Fire Department helicopter that drops water on a dangerous fire in a high-rise apartment building. Your chopper has 1500 gallons of water initially, as you are launched from the roof of a near-by building. Again, the numeric pad is your control, with [4] moving you left, [6] right, [2] down (useful when you go back to get more water), and [5] being your control to drop water on the fire. If you aren't able to put out the blaze in 3 minutes, the folks in the apartment perish. When you run out of water (always at the worst possible time...), you'll have to fly back to the right of your screen and resupply. This program uses sound, but if you see smoke, turn off your Pet immediately.

ALIENS!... The aliens are attacking Earth. You, at the helm of your Pet, are responsible for repelling the attack. The rules are very simple: as soon as a single alien reaches Earth, we all die. Press [4] to move left, [6] to move right, and [SHIFT] to fire a missle.

As you demonstrate your prowess at destroying aliens, they will send in their better (and faster) troops. May the Force be with you.

BONZO!... This amusement has many names, but we like 'The Bonzo Dog Chase' best. (Mr. Lockwood tells us that it was a big hit in 1930.) The game is for one or two people, with the Pet optionally joining the fun. After the players enter their names, a die is rolled. Press any key (except [STOP] of course) to end the roll of your die. Your marker will advance that many squares on the board. Should you have the good fortune of landing at the bottom of a ladder, you'll immediatly climb the ladder. But, should you somehow land at the top of a chute - whoosh! - down you go, and have to start climbing again.

CATCH!... You play the familiar game of catch with the computer. You move by using the numeric pad. (Don't forget that you can move diagonally. For example, pressing [1] will move you toward the lower left corner of the screen.) In this game you'll notice that some balls are thrown that are tough to catch, but it is always possible to catch them!

BUGS

In Cursor 15, there was a problem which only happened with 'old ROM' pets in the Hawaii! program. Please change line 450 as follows:

```
From: 450 PRINT E$"[UP]" TAB(13);
  To: 450 PRINT E$: PRINT "[UP][UP]" TAB(13);
```

Note that [UP] means 'cursor up'. The effect of the bug was that there were two masts on the boat. An unrelated problem is that Hawaii doesn't 'clean up' the sound registers when the program ends. You might want to change line 1580 as follows:

```
From: 1580 END
  To: 1580 POKE 59464,0: POKE 59466,0: POKE 59467,0: END
```

A note about GOMOKU: The author of Gomoku wrote it to enforce a rule that we neglected to tell you about: the play of a single stone may not create two open-ended three-in-a-rows at once.